

deprivation, early morning hunger, weaning, etc. Intense rage, the longing to be able to jump from cot to bed, to stop the queer intolerable happening there, to wreak vengeance on these disturbers of the peace, these faithless ones, and this at a time when the child is not able to move out of bed alone, when it is a prey to the feeling of the most complete helplessness—this rage and longing with the stimulated eroticism produce a tangled flurry of emotions and sensations with small possibility of directing them in the desired quarter.

Excretory activities or loud crying or both are in the majority of cases the only outlets for this psychic storm."

The sexual relation of the parents, then, creates a crucial emotional problem for the human child, and gives rise to fundamental anxieties which every child has to try to deal with in one way or another. This is the apex of all his mental conflict, and it comes to him at a time when he is at his most primitive levels of love, and has little hold upon external reality and little stability of ego development.

It may be asked, " Does this problem only arise for children who actually share their parents' bedroom during their first or second years of life ? " The answer is that, in its broad structure, it arises within the psyche of every human child.

The jealousies and rivalries connected with the child's relation to his mother on the oral and anal levels already hold the germ of 'this central situation, and the acute phase is probably reached in every child with the first incipient organisation

of his libido under genital primacy, round about the end of the first year, whether or not he is actually present at the primal scene. His own development leads him to this situation, phylogenetic factors being involved as well as those of individual experience. But it seems clear that

it becomes
more traumatic to the child when it is one of real
experience,
and especially when, as M. N. Searl suggests,
the child's
presence in the room with the parents in
intercourse happens
to coincide with some other crisis of his own
development,
such as teething or weaning.

For the next few years the child's
development is very
largely a problem of mastering this deep
conflict. By one
means or another he has to deal with the
stimulated instincts
and the resulting anxiety, so as to leave his ego
free for the
possibility of real development—in skill and
understanding,
and stable social relations.